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The Animal

Health Department have done much good by castrating scrub bulls, but unfortunately the farmers themselves have carried the matter further, to a dangerous degree, by castrating many of the remaining bulls in order to sell them to itinerant butchers' agents. This trade has developed rapidly during recent years and the services of any bull at all, let alone a good bull, are not always readily obtainable. The difficulty is that the cattle are owned one or two head at a time and rarely in herds, and a farmer who wants money, and has a bull he can sell to obtain it, does not see why he should keep a bull to serve his neighbours' cows, and is prepared to risk his own cow, or cows, not finding a mate. The supply of bulls is a matter receiving the attention of the Animal Health Department, through the Native Administrations.

Tending of Livestock.

The farmers' attitude to livestock is typified by the fact that herding is the responsibility of small boys. The stock are housed at night in an open compartment within the compound. No bedding is supplied and the unbeaten floor of the standing is only irregularly cleaned out; the result is a very unhealthy mess in the rains. Except to save groundnut and cowpea hay for feeding to horses and donkeys, no provision is made for dry season fodder. The stock are turned out to browse where they will over the stubble and upon recognised grazing grounds between farms; but since these are generally burnt over, the fodder supply is sparse in quantity and poor in quality, and all stock show considerable loss of condition as the dry season advances, particularly in years when rains are late. The supply of water also presents a problem in many areas. In the rains, sheep and goats are generally tethered to short stakes along farm boundaries, and cattle are herded on the grazing grounds.

Fowls.

Of all classes of livestock probably fowls receive most attention. They are able to pick up a fair living by gleaning around threshing floors, and the protein constituent of their diet is obtained largely from white ants. These are collected with cowdung placed in an old pot inverted over an ant run in the soil. There is scarcely a single compound in North Mamprusi that does not engage in the export trade in fowls to Kumasi. In the dry season a man will collect together about twenty-five fowls at a time and head-load them in a long crate to some market on the road, usually Bolgatanga, or Savelugu, and either sell them to a middleman there, or join a lorry and sell them in Kumasi. With the proceeds from the sale of fowls, it is common to purchase grain in Dagomba or South Mamprusi, to re-sell in Navrongo or Zuarungu Area, and thus to show a profit upon both the journey down, and the journey up.